

**Special Board Meeting
February 5, 2007
4:00 P.M.**

Supervisor Golden called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m. Present: Councilmen Countryman, Schreib, Johnson, and Madill (who joined the meeting at 4:20). Also present, Superintendent Parker and Richard and Bridget Allen.

The Allen's were in attendance due to their interest in the Right of Way issue involving their land. They left the meeting immediately; with the understanding their situation would not be addressed today. They did indicate upon departure what a good job they felt Superintendent Parker was doing with the maintenance of the Town's roads.

Supervisor Golden started the meeting by stating to the Board that the Highway Department had run into a problem this past weekend with the weather and the way it had hit us. Superintendent Parker asked if he could keep Mike Allen working extra hours during the time of need. Tom had tried calling two other part – time workers and he could not reach anyone. Supervisor Golden gave Superintendent Parker permission to use Mike Allen more than the 39 hours per week he had been hired for. If part –time help is not available they should be able to put Mike on.

Supervisor Golden had recently spent time in a plow and experienced first hand what the drivers are up against. He explained how he had operated many types of heavy equipment most of his life and could not believe how difficult it was operating a wing for the plow.

Supervisor Golden indicated that he would like to see Mike Allen stay on until April 1 and have the Highway Department use him as needed, to take the worry off of Superintendent Parker for the winter. He now has a concern, after his experience in the plow, that part – time MEO's do not have sufficient skill to operate the wing of the snowplow with maximum safety.

Councilman Johnson feels the Cost Effectiveness Committee is being "railroaded" and he wants to be certain it stays in place. He stated that Superintendent Parker does not want to embrace part – timers. Councilman Johnson feels that once you put a man on full time it would be very difficult to put the individual back to part time. As of the last meeting, Superintendent Parker had Mike Allen and Reggie Schweitzer and he was going to hire two more part –timers.

Superintendent Parker did not think that was his response. He remembered saying he had five applicants and he would pick out the three most qualified. He also stated that Leon Walker has plowed for years (approximately nine years). Tom trusts him, he is willing to work and is always available because he is retired. Leon watches the roads closely and can go out on the plow by himself.

This past weekend Pat Weston was sick and Jimmy Price had one night off due to the number of hours he had worked. Superintendent Parker has much to consider before he sends anyone out on the road. His men work as a team; they know the roads intimately. Superintendent Parker drove the plow himself this past weekend.

Councilman Johnson stated that the roads look great.

Councilman Madill was upset upon his arrival and felt that the Special Meeting should have been held after the Cost Effectiveness Committee had met. Feels the Committee is being broken up. Jim Madill said he is very frustrated.

Supervisor Golden felt it was a good idea having the meeting today due to the fact that three of the key people would already be together and it would be much more ideal to call together the remaining three men rather than call another meeting all together. He apologized for interfering with the Cost Effectiveness Committee Meeting.

Superintendent Parker has at least five part – timers he can use: Ray MacIntosh, Leon Walker, John Allen, Kenny Murray, and Reggie Schweitzer.

Superintendent Parker said he had no problem calling in subs if someone is sick but he can't train them properly. Over the weekend Tom had called Councilmen Madill and Schreib to ride in the plow. Councilman Madill refused to go and has no intention of going in the plow. Councilman Schreib was out of Town but Tom did contact him. Councilman Johnson asked if he Tom had tried to contact him and Tom said Warren had told him before that he would not ride in a plow. Councilman Johnson indicated today, "If there was an emergency situation he would go". Tom stated he could not run the Highway Department with part –timers. He is concerned that someone is going to get hurt. Safety is his number one issue.

Councilman Countryman feels the most important issue is to be certain the roads are being maintained in a safe manor. He has been here long enough and feels there is no problem with putting a man on for part –time / full –time and run him when you need him, this way we have a qualified man. He is siding

with public safety and Superintendent Parker made the proper move this past weekend by keeping Mike Allen on the plow.

Councilman Madill stated the Board has no intention of putting on another full time employee until somebody retires; they have discussed that for the past 12 months.

Councilman Johnson if the Highway needs help they need to hire more part –timers.

Superintendent Parker feels that part – timers cannot be properly trained while the plow drivers are trying to do their job. Training will slow the men down and bother their driving this would pose a safety issue.

Councilman Madill stated we are showing the State up with the condition of our roads. Why do we need an extra man?

Superintendent Parker stated there had always been seven men working for the Highway Department.

Councilman Schreib stated we would gain 300 hours of plowing with part – timers because we won't have to pay time and a half. Tom put in 1200 hours of overtime in the Budget. We can gain 400 hours of more plowing time if we stick with part – time. Save money with benefits and extra plowing time.

Councilman Madill was very upset and stated that Superintendent Parker refuses to use part –time employees. The first day that a man works over 40 hours he becomes a full time employee. He would qualify for benefits, shirts, shoes, etc. When Mike Allen was hired he had no problem working only 39 hours per week.

Superintendent Parker said that if someone has to attend a funeral or is sick he will use a part –timer. It is not working out for him having to juggle all these employees.

Councilman Schreib asked if Mike Allen weren't in the picture with a weekend like we just experienced, whom would the Highway Department have used. The fact of the matter is under DOT law you can only work 15 hours per day, legally.

Superintendent Parker stated if there were a fatal accident, the State would ask Tom for his paperwork, we would get sued. He could eat 400 hours of overtime in 2 weekends with 6 guys. This has been a fluke year and it is great that we are having a year like this one. Our Highway hours are right there with other surrounding Townships, his men don't put in any more time than any other Town.

Councilman Schreib asked if Tom could train plow drivers now that we have snow. Superintendent Parker said yes and he suggested the State Park Road would be a good place to have the training started.

Councilman Madill feels the Town is where it has always been, with the Highway and Town Board separate on their issues.

Councilman Countryman posed the question of bringing Kenny and Reggie in for training and Superintendent Parker said he had no problem with that. Nobody disagrees with how he handled this past weekend. If we get severe weather conditions in the near future have Mike Allen come in; if there are conditions where some snow banks just need maintaining by winging them back, bring in Reggie and Kenny and start training them. There are not enough Board members in favor of carrying Mike Allen so Tom needs to deal with the situation. There are only two Board members in favor of Mike and three not in favor of this.

Superintendent Parker stated this is not his idea but he will go along with it right now. He is afraid that once something goes wrong with the part-time employees that the finger will be pointed directly at him. He feels that it takes about three years of steady, on-the-job experience, day in and day out. Andy Quencer had two-week training with the State.

Councilman Madill stated that Bill Scarpocchi made \$72,000.00 last year working for the Highway Department. Superintendent Parker said there must be some kind of mistake and asked for written documentation showing proof of these figures.

Councilman Johnson stated that Superintendent Parker should offer overtime to the regular employees first, if they don't want it then you fill the time in with the part-timers. He ended the conversation by complimenting Superintendent Parker by stating that he was a good manager. Superintendent Parker thanked Warren for the compliment.

Councilman Schreib stated that Richard and Bridget Allen would like to ask the Town to mark the Right of Way that goes across their land so people who are walking across it know exactly where the right of way is located rather than going through their yard. The Board has agreed not to mark the property.

Councilman Schreib asked Tom if would swing down by the dry hydrant, on Point Peninsula, with a plow to keep it cleared out. Superintendent Parker agreed to do that.

Marsha Barton received a call from Attorney Steve Munson (attorney for Allen's) regarding the Allen and Hutchinson's waterline. He is telling her that there was never a right of way but there was an easement signed by Gladys Southwell years ago. She feels it is beyond the Water Board and it should be turned over to Mark Gebo and let him talk with Mr. Munson to sort it out. Mr. Munson feels the Town should pay for the waterline to be hooked back up to that curb stop over to Hutchinson's. Councilman Madill feels that the Allen's ripped it out of there and they should be responsible for its replacement. The Board agrees that the matter should be turned over to Attorney Gebo.

Councilman Schreib made a motion to adjourn at 5:25 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted

Kim Wallace
Town of Lyme Clerk